

# DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES



## CHAFEE IL NEWS BULLETIN

**Moving Indiana Foster Youth Toward Permanency**

**June/July 2006**

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[www.statevoucher.org](http://www.statevoucher.org)

**Foster Club Website**

<http://www.fosterclub.com/index.cfm>

### MEDICAID for Youth Aging out of Foster Care

Medicaid will be available on July 1, 2006 for all eligible youth who have their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday in foster care and will continue until the youth's 21<sup>st</sup> birthday as long as the youth meets the eligibility requirements and does the re-determinations as required. For probation youth to be eligible for Medicaid, they must have a case and a case plan indicating the need for IL services in ICWIS. There is no resource limit and the income standard is 200% of the Federal Poverty Level. The youth will be an assistance group of one.

For all youth who will age out of foster care, the Family Case Manager must assist the youth in maintaining Medicaid coverage within one month of their 18th birthday for youth by:

- 1) helping the youth fill out a Hoosier Healthwise (purple) application one month prior to the youth's 18th birthday,
- 2) detach the page of the application entitled important information about Hoosier Healthwise which contains a list of rights and responsibilities for Hoosier Healthwise members,
- 3) fill out a Foster Care Independence Referral (attached) and attach it to the application and forward to Public Assistance in the Department of Family Resources (DFR) office, and
- 4) maintain the youth's coverage until notified by the DFR worker that the new category is ready to be authorized.



FOSTER CARE  
DEPENDENCE REFERRAL

Upon receiving the referral, the DFR caseworker will:

- 1) review the referral form and application and request income verification from the recipient if necessary,
- 2) proceed with the eligibility determination,
- 3) contact the DCS case manager (whose contact information is on the referral form) and request closure of the current Medicaid coverage when the case processing is complete except for authorization of the benefit, and
- 4) authorize the new category for the youth.

Former foster youth who aged out of foster care at 18 who are applying for Medicaid will be asked by the DFR case worker if they turned 18 in care. Verification of the youth aging out of foster care will be obtained from the local DCS office if the youth was a ward of the county in which they are applying for Medicaid. If the youth is residing in a county other than the county where wardship was held and applying for Medicaid, their eligibility will be determined through the Central Office of DCS.

### Featured website:

[www.educationalsuccesses.org](http://www.educationalsuccesses.org)

This is an excellent tool to assist youth with career planning.

### Contact Us: Independent Living Coordinator:

**Mary Lou Easter, MSW**

**Central Office -**

**317-232-7116**

**Warren County DCS -**

**765-762-6125**

[mary.easter@dcs.in.gov](mailto:mary.easter@dcs.in.gov)

## NEEDED: Youth Advisory Board Applications

The current Youth Advisory Boards (YAB) will be disbanded as of June 30, 2006. A new State Youth Advisory Board will replace the 13 regional boards. Charlene Hederick of Hederick Partnerships was selected to manage the State YAB and the contracting process has begun. While that contracting process is going on, it is vital that interested youth begin to apply to serve the region in which they reside. One youth will be selected from the applications submitted to serve on the State YAB from each region with selection made by the Regional Services Council.

Serving on the State YAB will be an excellent opportunity for youth to obtain training in leadership, advocacy, public speaking, and to develop skills in these areas that will benefit them as they apply for internships, submit essays for contests and scholarships, and other areas of leadership. Participation on the YAB will also help the youth to build their resume as they seek employment or entrance into college in the future. **Please provide the YAB application form (attached) to all youth age 16 up to age 21 who may be interested in applying for this opportunity.**



11 Form - Youth  
Advisory Board...



YAB Service  
Standard 4-06.doc ..

The YAB service standards are also attached to provide more in-depth information on the activities and stipends provided to the youth and the youth's transporter to all meetings as well as other incentives that are a part of serving on the YAB.

## IL Youth Conferences A Success

One hundred and eleven youth attended the IL Youth Conferences at Ivy Tech in Columbus and Purdue University in West Lafayette along with sixty four adults. Those who missed out on these conferences missed a great opportunity to meet other foster youth and to learn about preparing for their future through budgeting, education and employment.

Five former foster youth shared their experiences through keynote talks and serving on a panel discussing their experience maneuvering the financial aid process to determining housing options to managing in college while working part time jobs. The five youth presenting at both conferences were:

- 1) Lee Klejnot, Purdue University graduate from Tippecanoe County
- 2) Eprise Armstrong attending Taylor University from St. Joseph County
- 3) Jackie Pettit attending IUPUI from Kosciusko County
- 4) Angela Hill attending IUPUI from Vanderburgh County
- 5) Antonia Likens attending Ivy Tech in Muncie is from the Florida foster care system

Youth comments of the "most memorable thing" at the conference:

- Hearing success stories from former foster youth
- Keep positive people around you
- You can overcome your past
- Learning a lot about college...you can go to college
- You need to know how to deal with money
- Don't surrender in realizing your dreams
- I can get money to go to college...financial aid
- I don't need to drop out of school...stay in school
- I know now that there are services and people out there that want to support me
- Foster kids (the speakers) with good attitudes...involve more foster youth throughout the entire conference
- Don't get discouraged and give up...set goals
- I can make a difference...I can do anything I put my mind to

One comment about the keynote speaker, Lee Klejnot:

Good....awesome....touched my heart....he made me proud to be a foster child.

There were many positive comments about the sessions and always comments to help improve on the 2007 conferences. The youth and adults in attendance provided positive feedback on the speakers and the flow of the conference. Planning is in the beginning stages for the 2007 conferences. Former foster youth currently serving in internships over the summer and youth from the new State Youth Advisory Board will assist with presentations and other functions at the 2007 conferences as well as youth involved in the long-term study involving former Indiana foster youth being conducted by Luther Consulting of Indianapolis.

## Revised IL Policy Online

The revised IL policy has been posted online at <http://www.in.gov/dcs/policies/cwmanual.html>. Please review as there are many changes from previous policy.

### Highlights of the new and revised policy include:

- ✓ Youth receiving Chafee services must be 16 and older.
- ✓ Former foster youth ages 18 to 21:
  - must have been in care for 6 months after the age of 16 for case management services or
  - turn 18 in care to be eligible for room and board and case management services.
- ✓ There is no longer a match for counties for Chafee services.
- ✓ All youth age 16 and older must be provided IL services whether or not Chafee funds are used which includes youth being placed in residential facilities, group homes, and therapeutic and special needs foster care.
- ✓ The Ansell Casey Life Skills Assessment is to be completed by each youth placed in residential facilities, group homes, and therapeutic and special needs foster care within 30 days of placement and an IL Plan developed based on the results of the assessment.
- ✓ Emancipation Goods and Services can only be accessed when Chafee services are being provided and the form is to be used when requesting funding. Any item being requested under the "Other" category for DCS approval must have approval for the item from the IL Coordinator attached to the request.
- ✓ A Transition Planning case conference must take place when a youth turns 17 and reconvened every 6 months following the initial case conference until dismissal of the case.
- ✓ Transition Planning Toolkit is to be used with the youth inventory completed and a transition plan developed at 17 and updated every 6 months until the case is dismissed.
- ✓ All youth in residential facilities, group homes, and therapeutic and special needs foster homes must be referred to a Chafee contracted service provider for transition services at age 17½ to prepare the youth with employment and housing upon case dismissal.
- ✓ New State Youth Advisory Board
  - One youth from every region will be selected to serve. Applications from interested youth will be scored by the Regional Services Council.

## Scattered Site Apartment Placements Entry in ICWIS Instructions

All youth currently placed in scattered site apartments must be entered in ICWIS beginning July 1, 2006 in order to determine eligibility for Medicaid, room and board assistance, and the Education and Training Voucher program. The enhancement has been added to ICWIS for the placements to be entered.

To enter the scattered site placement for all youth placed in an apartment through an LCPA (private foster care agency) or the local DCS office in ICWIS:

- ✓ On the *Placement Details* page, change the last placement that moved the youth to the scattered site placement to reflect the *Reason for Change* from the dropdown list as *Transitional Housing*. Ending a placement with this reason will indicate that the child is still under the placement and care responsibility of DCS, is currently receiving Independent Living services but has moved to an apartment or scattered site housing. When a placement is ended with a reason of 'Transitional Housing', it will not end the removal episode.

- ✓ Enter the scattered site placement by clicking on **New** on the placement history screen and choosing **Transitional Housing** as the **Type of Resource** on the screen that comes up. The Type of Service will automatically set to Transitional Housing.
  - The system checks for a valid address (apartment) of the placement begin date. *If the profile-address window does not have an address record equal to the placement begin date, the user will be prompted with the following message: Please click the 'Address' button to enter the child's new address.* Clicking this button will open the **Insert Address** window.
  - **Insert Address** window will allow the user to **enter the child's current address** on the profile screen.
- ✓ Click on the **Retrive** button and select the LCPA who is contracted to place the youth in an apartment from the list that comes up. If the county has placed the youth in an apartment that is not included in the list, please contact Mary Lou Easter at [mary.easter@dcg.in.gov](mailto:mary.easter@dcg.in.gov) to have the placement entered into the database so the placement can be entered.

If there are any questions regarding entering these placements, please contact the ICWIS Help Desk or Mary Lou Easter for assistance. It is vital that these placements be entered as soon as possible to ensure that all youth have equal opportunity to access those services dependent on this information.

## Former Indiana Foster Youth Serving in Internships

The opportunity to serve in internships during the summer while in college is available to all former foster youth who have the desire and motivation to move out of their comfort zone and experience new cultures, professional work opportunities, and totally foreign environments. These youth are self disciplined and motivated to better themselves and are enjoying the fruits of their hard work in high school and their first year or two in college. Participating in the new State Youth Advisory Board is an excellent opportunity for youth to build their self-confidence and prepare for opportunities such as this.

It is very important that everyone working with foster youth encourage them toward post-secondary education using these youth as examples of what can happen when they set their mind to it. The only support many of these youth have are those professionals who make decisions for them while they are in foster care while others have connections to extended family. Regardless of the support these youth have, they can be very proud of their accomplishments. It is always amazing how many of the youth want to come back and better the foster care system for those who come behind them. It says a lot about their character and the models they chose for their lives!

**Sharde Armstrong (St. Joseph County)** was selected to participate in the Congressional Coalition on Adoption Foster Care Internship in Washington DC. Below is an email received from Sharde:

*This summer I have been placed in the office of Senator John F. Kerry; an opportunity so amazing, it is difficult to even grasp the idea that I am here. This summer has been a summer for learning and a summer for growth in more areas than one. As I came out here, I was dealing with the harsh blow of losing a beloved friend and was unsure about my place here, but as time has gone on; I can see that this is where I was meant to be. The work here ranges from that of simply opening Senator Kerry's mail to doing research for things that are being discussed on the hill; and I find that each piece of work that I do has benefited me greatly. Opening the mail gives me an idea of the pressure that senators face, and doing research has been an exceptional form of learning; even something so simple as watering the plants has been a lesson in discipline. I have been given an opportunity to encounter senators and at times, even to discuss the foster care system with them. This fits neatly in with my passion for current foster youth and reminds me that this is exactly where I need to be. The work here is not yet done...and neither am I.*

**Rebecca (Becca) Hamieh (Delaware County)** was selected to represent Indiana as an ALL STAR with the Foster Club in Seaside, Oregon for the summer. Below is an excerpt from an email from Becca:

*"I am extremely sure that we have a wonderful group of all-stars who are willing to put themselves out there to make a difference for this cause. I am so humble to have received such a privilege. Just to make a difference for these youth is awesome. I am so excited. I hope that one day Indiana can not only sponsor a youth but also have the all-stars as a team come and put on a conference. There are so many wonderful workshops that we are learning that as a youth from Indiana I never had these opportunities. I love it here but can't wait to get home to share what I have learned."*

**Izes Cross (Lake County)** is serving an internship through the Orphan Foundation (OFA) who is contracted to manage the Indiana Education and Training Voucher Program. He is working in the emergency department as well as other areas at Washington Hospital Center in Washington DC.

*His first email back to OFA was one of excitement about his first day on the job. He said, "Heather took me right under her wing and I felt very appreciated. As far as my responsibilities went, I spent a couple of hours filing and majority of my time went to introducing myself to some great people and trying to build professional relationships with them. I really had a great time. I can't wait to see what tomorrow brings. This experience has really changed my life already and I know that further down the road, I will defeat all odds and be what I so much desire to be in life and I owe it all to those who helped me along the way."*

**Mercedes Wooten (Marion County)** is serving an internship through OFA also. She is working in the litigation unit of the law firm of Willkie Farr and Gallagher LLP in Washington DC.

*An email from Mercedes to OFA: "I have learned so many new skills while on this internship and it has only been three days. On my first day I was taught how to file a folder. I had to file the folders in alphabetical order and it had to be accurate or else I may have destroyed a lot of attorney's paperwork. I feel the duties I had to do was very important because if the lawyer was to attend court he would need the file to be in correct order. One interesting person I met was my boss's assistant who is originally from the Virgin Islands. She is so friendly and makes me feel welcome. This week was kind of a slow process because I have just begun to work. I know I will have so much knowledge about my career in the weeks to come."*